

2021 UAiTED Innovation Competition - Cross-Border Collaboration and Sustainable Solutions through Innovation

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The University Alliance in Talent Education Development (UAiTED) offers invaluable opportunities for interdisciplinary students from different universities to collaborate on possible solutions for the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Expert online courses on design thinking, communication skills and project management are organized to equip the participants for the competition.

Our team, G.M.E. (Green Metropolis Enthusiasts), worked on Ecosystem for Innovation, which focuses on Goal 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure) and Goal 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities). We proposed a self-sustainable, innovative and expandable e-waste management ecosystem to facilitate the recycling process. From hardware to software, from frontline e-waste collection to backend e-component transformation and from financing to operation, our team provided a comprehensive business model to differentiate modern e-waste collection services from traditional e-waste recycling activities.

The UAiTED Innovation Competition is an excellent opportunity for undergraduates to gain hands-on experience in business model planning. Working closely with undergraduates from different countries has been truly inspiring and has broadened my horizons. All of the competitors demonstrated high motivation in the contest stage, and some finalists even implemented their ideas from the competition into the R&D stage—their enthusiasm and motivation were very impressive. To apply academic knowledge (regarding, for example, promotional planning, operation cycles and breakeven analysis) into real practice is both challenging and fulfilling. In addition, the prize money is certainly attractive: US\$5,000 for the winning team.

The 2021 UAiTED Innovation Competition was a precious and memorable experience. I am grateful to our team mentor, Ms. Coco Wang from the Taiwan Business Council for Sustainable Development, for her guidance and opinions, and to our team leader, Karen Law from the National University of Singapore, for leading and supporting the team.

I look forward to seeing more students from City University of Hong Kong participate in the UAiTED Innovation Competition in the coming years.

